

KC consumer insights company is acquired

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Cathy Allin, president of Kansas City-based Decision Insight.
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By [Leslie Collins](#) – Staff Writer, Kansas City Business Journal
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[Decision Insight](#) Inc. is bracing for more growth after selling to Connecticut-based TABS Analytics, which plans to continue expanding the Kansas City office.

In addition, Decision Insight CEO [Cathy Allin](#) said, the two companies' combined expertise will create a powerful solution.

"They have a similar goal to create a unique and differentiated solution for their client," Allin told the *Kansas City Business Journal*. "I felt like the ability to align their data analytics with our research was a really unique combination that was going to create opportunity for both of us in the marketplace with our current clients and together with new clients."

TABS sought out the Kansas City company for the acquisition, which closed May 6. Financial details were not disclosed. Moving forward, Allin will remain president of Decision Insight and will join the TABS board.

The Kansas City shopper-centric market research company provides consumer insights and retail strategy to major consumer packaged goods (CPG), pharmaceutical, retail and telecommunications companies. Some of its marquee clients include PepsiCo, Nestle, Verizon and Mondelez International Inc.

Consumer analytics firm TABS specializes in the CPG industry and has developed proprietary software and analytics platforms. It works with big-name clients such as Unilever and Physicians Formula and has consultants throughout the U.S., which gives Decision Insight an opportunity to scale and target new industries, Allin said.

TABS also has access to additional retailer, syndicated and e-commerce data, which will help Decision Insight create a better offering for clients.

Although TABS specializes in analyzing what's happening in the market, Decision Insight has cut its teeth on a "what if" approach with market research. Blending both companies' focus areas creates a unique offering that also can lead to new solutions and capabilities for clients, Allin said.

One example TABS founder and Chairman [Kurt Jetta](#) cited is the ability to now give CPG manufacturers a competitive edge in a relatively flat market and new value-add they can offer retail partners. TABS plans to combine its and Decision Insight's technology to create a new tool for manufacturers that allows retailers to glean real-time insights regarding aisle and category arrangement. It can be a differentiator for manufacturers vying for shelf space.

"Retailers are going to be more predisposed to partner with and defer to manufacturers that can offer something different," he said.

Jetta said he was impressed with Decision Insight's technology, including its virtual shopping experience tool, which tests how consumers will react to a variety of scenarios. It pairs well with TABS' focus on the retailer side, he said.

Although the two companies share some customers, each works with a different facet of those businesses, creating an avenue to expand channel distribution and drive organic growth, he said.

TABS has made a few acquisitions in the past, but Jetta said Decision Insight is particularly meaningful. It will increase TABS' revenue and employee base by roughly 50 percent, bringing the combined workforce to more than 60 people.

"This now gets us to a materially larger and more significant service company in our industry," he said. "It really gets us up to a new tier and a new consideration set for various projects. ... We're now in the same consideration set of IBM or Accenture, some of those real mega companies."

As Jetta looks to the future, Kansas City will continue to be an office he wants to grow. Next year, he expects to hire more local employees in project management and production-oriented roles.